



DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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AMERICA AT RISK:

DESPITE CONTINUED WARNINGS...



... AMERICA'S READINESS CONTINUES TO SLIDE

AMERICA IS VULNERABLE

In Congressional testimony last week, military officials confirmed America is vulnerable. The U.S. Armed Forces are strained to the breaking point, our National Guard and Reserves are stressed and depleted, and President Bush's latest budget cuts in half homeland security funds desperately needed by communities across the country. Nearly seven years after 9/11, and five years into a war in Iraq that continues to exhaust our troops with no end in sight, America may be at its most exposed. As Marine Maj. General Arnold L. Punaro said earlier this month, America now faces "an appalling gap in readiness for homeland defense."

NATIONAL GUARD HOMELAND PREPAREDNESS SLIDES

2007: Chief of National Guard Bureau: Most Guard Units Are Poorly Equipped. In February 2007, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum testified to the independent Commission on the National Guard and Reserves that 88% of stateside Army National Guard units are "very poorly equipped," with less than half of what they need to respond to a domestic crisis. Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, coordinates between the states and the Pentagon. He also said 45% of Air National Guard units lacked the necessary equipment to deploy. Blum also stated, "We have not delivered on equipment. We owe them better than that." [[LA Times](#), 2/25/07; [Associated Press](#), 2/25/07]

2007: Strain on Guard and Reserves Unsustainable. Last year Arnold L. Punaro, Chairman of the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, said "We can't sustain the [National Guard and reserves] on the course we're on." [[Washington Post](#), 3/2/07]

2008: Report Finds "Appalling Gap" in Homeland Security Readiness. A report by the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves found that there is an "appalling gap" in forces able to respond to chemical, biological and nuclear strikes on U.S. soil. The Commission Chairman Marine Maj. Gen. Arnold L. Punaro said Guard readiness has continued to slide since March [2007], when the panel found that 88 percent of Army National Guard units were rated "not ready." He said, "We think there is an appalling gap in readiness for homeland defense, because it will be the Guard and reserve that have to respond for these things." [[Washington Post](#), 2/1/08]

2008: Military Lacks Readiness and Equipment to Respond to Homeland Attack; National Guard Faces \$48 Billion Equipment Shortage. The Commission on the National Guard and Reserves found that National Guard forces do not have the equipment or training they need to respond to a catastrophic attack on the country. Commission Chairman Arnold L. Punaro said, "Right now we don't have the forces we need, we don't have them trained, we don't have the equipment." The commission's report concluded the nation "does not have sufficient trained, ready forces available." The reported also detailed a shortfall of about \$48 billion in equipment as of 2007, and

detailed that more than half the states' Army Guard units have less than 50 percent of the equipment they need. [[Associated Press](#), 1/31/08]

2008 BUDGET: BUSH CUTS HOMELAND SECURITY GRANTS

Bush Cuts Homeland Security Grants in Half. In an editorial on President Bush's 2009 budget request the *New York Times* wrote, "The budget fine print shows homeland security grants for states, cities and local first responders being slashed by almost half, to \$2.2 billion. This includes deep cuts in transit and port security and in the long-promised, still unrealized priority of better emergency communications." [[New York Times](#), 2/8/08]

Gov. Spitzer Said Congress "Must Reject" Homeland Grant Cuts. A release by the Office of New York Governor Eliot Spitzer stated, "Congress must reject the Bush Administration's cuts to major state and local homeland security grant programs, and increase federal funding for the State Homeland Security Grant Program." [Spitzer Release, 2/11/08]

Sen. Collins Opposes Cuts to "Vital Homeland Security Grant Programs." Sen. Susan Collins, the ranking Republican on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, said of Bush's proposed cuts to homeland security grants, "Overall, I oppose the significant decrease in funding for vital homeland security grant programs, and I will work ... to ensure that these programs receive more funding than the president proposes." [[Portland Press Herald](#), 2/5/08]

WAR CONTINUES TO STRAIN MILITARY READINESS

Stress on Military Hits Magazine Covers. In April 2007, *Time* ran a cover story entitled "America's Broken Down Army" in which it reported on the lack of training, equipment, and standards facing the U.S. Army. That same week *National Journal* ran a cover story named "For Army, Code Yellow" in which it reported on the strain the Iraq War has caused and in which it asked, "So, is today's war-weary Army hollow?" [[Time](#), 4/5/07; [National Journal](#), 4/7/07]

Pentagon Assessment: War Demands Strain Military Readiness. The *Associated Press* reported that "a classified Pentagon assessment concludes that long battlefield tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, along with persistent terrorist activity and other threats, have prevented the U.S. military from improving its ability to respond to any new crisis. According to the report, there is a 'significant' risk that the military cannot quickly and fully respond to another outbreak elsewhere in the world. Joint Chiefs Chairman Admiral Mullen said the 15-month tours in Iraq and Afghanistan are too long and must be reduced to 12 months, with longer rest periods at home. 'We continue to build risk with respect to that,' he said." [[Associated Press](#), 2/8/08]

Joint Chiefs Chairman Testified that "People Are Tired." Adm. Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Armed Services Committee "The well is deep, but it is not infinite. We must get Army deployments down to 12 months as soon as possible. People are tired." [[Associated Press](#), 2/6/08]

Joint Chiefs Chairman: U.S. Forces Are “Significantly Stressed.” Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the military's top uniformed officer, said U.S. forces are “significantly stressed” by fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan while simultaneously trying to stem the tide of violent extremism elsewhere. Mullen stated, “I am extremely concerned about the toll the current pace of operations is taking on them and on their families, on our equipment and on our ability to respond to crises and contingencies beyond ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.” [[Associated Press](#), 2/6/08]

IN THE STATES:

NATURAL DISASTERS EXPOSE NATIONAL GUARD WEAKNESSES

Governor Sebelius Said Iraq War Hurt Guards Ability to Respond to Tornadoes.

After Kansas was ravaged by tornadoes, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius said the war in Iraq exposed holes in domestic disaster response. The governor said about half the state's National Guard trucks are in Iraq, equipment that would be helpful in removing debris. Sebelius said the state also is missing a number of well-trained personnel. Sebelius said, “I don't think there is any question if you are missing trucks, Humvees and helicopters that the response is going to be slower...The real victims here will be the residents of Greensburg, because the recovery will be at a slower pace.” [[Associated Press](#), 5/8/07]

While California Fires Rages, National Guard Deployed in Iraq. While the California fires of October 2007 were burning, 2000 members of the California National Guard were deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. The previous May the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that, “As state forestry officials predict an unusually harsh fire season this summer, the California National Guard says equipment shortages could hinder the guard's response to a large-scale disaster.” [[Sacramento Bee](#), 10/10/07; [San Francisco Chronicle](#), 5/11/07]

IN THE STATES:

NATIONAL GUARD LACKING CRITICAL EQUIPMENT ARKANSAS

Arkansas National Guard Short on Rifles and Artillery; Equipment Left in Iraq. In February 2007, the *New York Times* reported that, “Capt. Christopher Heathscott, a spokesman for the Arkansas National Guard, said the state's 39th Brigade Combat Team was 600 rifles short for its 3,500 soldiers and also lacked its full arsenal of mortars and howitzers.” The *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* reported that, “Humvees, 5-ton trucks, weapons and even radios are all handed off to incoming units in Iraq, leaving those homebound units without even basic equipment. Ross and state National Guard officials have been arguing for almost two years that more equipment is needed to replace what was left in Iraq or loaned out to other units....But deploying units get priority on equipment, putting newly returned units at the bottom of the list - until recently. Under the policy changes, however, units are receiving equipment much sooner than they used to.” [[New York Times](#), 2/22/07; [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#), 2/25/07]

COLORADO

Colorado National Guard Helicopters in Iraq. In Colorado, rescue operations were hampered by a shortage of some equipment that has been transferred to Iraq. "Normally, we would use the bigger Chinook helicopters for this kind of work, but all three of our Chinooks are deployed in Iraq right now," said Lt. Darin Overstreet of the Colorado National Guard. "We had to use Black Hawks and Hueys, and they're smaller. But we have managed to borrow one Chinook from Oklahoma." [[Washington Post](#), 1/3/07]

HAWAII

Hawaii Guard Recovered Far Less Than Half its Equipment From Iraq. Brig. Gen. Joe Chaves, commander of both the Hawaii Army National Guard and the 29th Brigade Combat Team, noted that when the 29th Brigade returned after a year's tour in Iraq, it brought back only 30% to 40% of its equipment. Chaves said because some of the equipment left in Iraq were heavy trucks and other vehicles, it could affect the Hawaii Army Guard's state mission. [[Star Bulletin](#), 8/2/06]

INDIANA

Indiana National Guard Is Short on Night Goggles, Machines Guns, Vehicles, and Communications Equipment. In February 2007, the *Indianapolis Star* reported that the Indiana National Guard announced in late February 2007 that the biggest unit called up since World War II could head for Iraq in 2008 to bolster the surge of U.S. troops there. According to its commander, the 3,500 member 76th Infantry Brigade would need refitting. Maj. Gen. R. Martin Umbarger, the adjutant general in charge of Indiana's 13,000 National Guard troops said, "We're short on night-vision goggles...and some machine guns, vehicles and communication equipment." [[Indianapolis Star](#), 2/23/07]

IOWA

Iowa National Guard Face One of the Worst Equipment Shortage. A report in early 2007 stated that the Iowa Army National Guard has one of the worst equipment shortages of National Guard organizations in the country for responding to large-scale terror attacks or natural disasters. According to Lt. Col. Gregory Hapgood, Jr the Iowa Guard was primarily short on heavy vehicles, communication devices, and intense one-man weapon systems such as the M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon, operating two-per infantry squad in the National Guard...The gas-operated rifle, which can function like a machine-gun, was called up in large numbers by the U.S. Army for use in Iraq because of shortages. [[Des Moines Register](#), 2/1/07; The [Daily Iowan](#), 2/8/07]

LOUISIANA

Louisiana Face Vehicle Shortage; Would Hinder Response to Major Hurricane. "We are really concerned about vehicles," said Lt. Col. Pete Schneider, a spokesman for the Louisiana Guard. "We would have enough for a small-scale issue . . . maybe a Category 1 tropical storm we could handle -- an event that doesn't involve massive flooding or massive search and rescue," he said. But for bigger disasters, Louisiana would need help from other states. [[Washington Post](#), 3/2/07]

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Lacked Trucks. In 2007 it was reported that Mississippi lacked trucks and was relying on contractors to fill gaps in engineering vehicles, according to the state Guard's assistant adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Ike Pylant. [[Washington Post](#), 3/2/07]

NEBRASKA

Nebraska Short on Equipment. Nebraska was short 1,800 pieces of equipment worth some \$35 million. Nationally, the Guard has lost more than 64,000 pieces -- from trucks to radios to weapons. [[Omaha World-Herald](#), 12/31/06]

NEW JERSEY

New Jersey Lacked Vehicles. New Jersey does not have its full complement of trucks designed to drive through high water, Humvees and other vehicles designed to move personnel... "There is no question that there is a shortage of equipment across the country, and New Jersey is no different," Maj. Gen. Glenn Rieth said. [[Associated Press](#), 2/3/07]

NEW MEXICO

New Mexico National Guard Training on Old Rifles and Helicopter. In February 2007, the *Associated Press* reported the following: "Brig. Gen. Kenny Montoya, adjutant general for the nearly 4,000 New Mexico National Guard troops, said this month that the Army has never given the Guard the resources it needs. And, he said, after decades of shortages, 'you're not going to catch up overnight.' New Mexico Guard troops who are not deployed train with M-16 rifles instead of the more modern M-14s. The Guard flies old UH-60 Hawk helicopters not designed for the high-altitude missions their pilots have to perform. One Guard truck company had to leave its equipment in Iraq after a deployment, and it took three years to get replacement trucks," Montoya said. [[Associated Press](#), 2/26/07]

NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina Said it Lacked Manpower and Equipment. "We the governors rely on the Guard to respond to natural disasters, a pandemic or terrorist attack," said North Carolina Gov. Michael F. Easley, a Democrat. "Currently, we don't have the manpower or the equipment to perform that dual role" of responding to both state and federal needs." [[Los Angeles Times](#), 2/25/07]

OHIO

Ohio Guard's Gear is Obsolete. Mark Wayda, the director of government and public affairs for the Ohio National Guard, said that Ohio's guard unit also is equipped with gear that is obsolete. [9News/AP, 2/18/07]

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma National Guard Short Rifles, Night Goggles, and Body Armor. In February 2007, the *New York Times* reported on equipment shortages faced by the Oklahoma National Guard. "'We're behind the power curve, and we can't piddle around,' Maj. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, commander of the Oklahoma National Guard, said in an interview. He added that one-third of his soldiers lacked the M-4 rifles preferred by active-duty soldiers and that there were also shortfalls in night vision

goggles and other equipment. If his unit is going to be sent to Iraq next year, he said, ‘We expect the Army to resource the Guard at the same level as active-duty units.’” It was also reported by the *Daily Oklahoman*, that body armor and some weapons are in short supply to Oklahoma Guardsmen, as National Guard units nationally have shared their resources to equip troops deploying to combat areas. [New York Times, 2/22/07; Daily Oklahoman, 2/1/07]

TENNESSEE

Over \$200 Million in Tennessee Guard Equipment is Overseas; Tanks and Vehicles Outdated. When the Tennessee Guard was deployed to Iraq, members brought millions of dollars worth of equipment with them. As of February 2007, \$140 million worth had been retrieved but \$200-\$300 million remains overseas. “We need to get that replaced because if we had a disaster, a major earthquake for example, it's precisely the kind of equipment that we would want to have in Tennessee,” Gov. Phil Bredesen said.

Moreover, the Tennessee Guard has a shortage in modern vehicles and tanks. According to Maj. Gen. Gus Hargett, “Although we have not yet received these state-of-the-art armor vehicles, we do have earlier generation M1 Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles on which to train our soldiers.” [News Channel 5, 2/24/07]

VIRGINIA

Virginia Does Not Have Trucks Needed to Respond to Major Attack on the National Capital Region. Col. Robert Simpson, director of the joint staff for the Virginia National Guard, said that in the event of “a very large . . . chemical, biological or nuclear incident in the national capital region, I would need every truck I was authorized, and we don't have that...We are definitely short trucks, all wheeled vehicles.” Simpson said the Guard is short on radios, bulldozers and other gear. [Washington Post, 3/2/07]

WASHINGTON

Washington National Guard Left Critical Equipment in Iraq. In 2007 it was reported by the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* that “As of last spring, the Washington State National Guard reported radios, GPS locators and Humvees worth \$33 million had been left in Iraq.” [Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 2/27/07]